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POEMS AND SONGS

OF WHICH SOME ARE RENDERED

FROM THE SPANISH.

BY

CHARLES WELSH MASON.

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CONTENTS.

Page

A MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE PRINCE CONSORT 1

IMITATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS FROM THE SPANISH 34

ENGLISH LYRICS 55

A MONODY

ON THE DEATH OF

THE LATE PRINCE CONSORT.

"He, onely, like himselfe, was second unto none,
Whose deth (through life) we rue, and al in vain do mone."

PART I.

I.

What shall I say, to whom the past
Is present still? What sing of Death,
Who taketh naught away but breath,
Who leaveth naught which shall not last?

Who leaveth love, a little spark
Half quench'd in tears which flow amain;
Who leaveth, through the night of pain,
A beacon, burning in the dark.

II.

To us the past appeareth sad,
Who feel our loss, but cannot see
His gain, or ours; which seeing, He,
For us and for himself, is glad.

And greater than our loss, I ween
Loss could not be: for thine, sweet soul,
Is ours, who seemest, in thy dole,
Crown'd with our sorrow, sorrow's Queen.

And deeper than the constant sea
Which maketh moan upon the shore,
Our love doth grow to more and more,
And with its arms encompass thee.

III.

To us the past is present still,
    Who linger in the tearful vale;
    Who court not any changeful gale
Which wantons on the breezy hill.

To Her, to us, the vale is dear,
    The sweet sad past which passeth not:
    We mourn around a mournful spot,
We languish for a by-gone year.

And still among us lives his name,
    The man with head, and heart, and hand;
    And all about the sorrowing land,
From lip to lip is breathed his fame.

PART II.

I.

What art Thou, having past away,
Clear head, great heart, and royal hand?
Doth thy consummate spirit stand,
Among our spirits, here, to-day?

What seëst Thou, whose eyes are free
From mortal blindness? Let us know
The dead are round us. Let us grow
To that which Thou would'st have us be.

II.

O CLEAR in thought, and pure in heart!
    What tribute shall we bring to Thee,
    Who brookest no impurity,
Who knowest now, no more in part?

Who seëst from a blissful clime
    That which we seek among the years,
    And falter, blinded with our tears,
And lost among the mists of time.

No thought or act we offer Thee:
    A crown of love with tears we bring
    To Her, and in the song we sing
A sigh for purer love to be.

III.

With close-lock'd hands, and mingled tears,
We linger in the valley still;
And round the bases of the hill
A mist is driven from the meres.

From out the mist come feeble cries,
Which mingle madly right with wrong.
We only know that Thou art strong,
And holdest truth among the wise:

Great Death hath made thee wise and strong:
Our loss is dearer for Thy gain:
And growing wise in bearing pain,
We learn to sunder right from wrong.

PART III.

I.

What shall I sing of Death who came,
An angel robed in white, and bore
Him from us weeping on the shore?
How shall I measure praise or blame?

O Death! Thou seëst how we mourn.
We doubt not, but our eyes are dim;
We fain would have a glimpse of Him
In that still place, beyond the bourne.

And, waiting by with folded wing,
The angel answers, "Be content:
Ye draw towards a great event,
Not seeing what the seasons bring."

II.

Beyond the bourne we have not been,
And he who goes may not return;
Or, coming back, we may not learn
What are the things which he has seen.

And even Him we may not see.
The silent Soul is with us still,
Contèmplating our little ill
In that great light which is to be.

We may not see: we can but trust
That He hath seen the end of all,
Discerneth that we shall not fall
Although we falter in the dust.

PART IV.

I.

The bells of Yule ring out again
    The dying year. With note of woe,
    And clang of war, the seasons go;
And Thou art gone, but we remain.

The seasons go, and swiftly come
    The sister-seasons in their train;
    They come and go, but we, in pain,
Await a passage to our home;

Nor sit and sing, with idle hand,
    But mingle in the toil and strife,
    And battle with the surge of life
Upon the borders of the land.

II.

But ever sweet it seems to dream
Of Him we loved, at dewy dawn,
Or when long shadows span the lawn
And lie athwart the rosy stream.

And memory mingles other days
With those which are, and solace brings
To one who tunes his harp, and sings
Of grief that goes and love that stays;

Of love that cannot pass away,
Though all things else may come and go,
And life shall languish, as the snow
Which fails before a summer day.

PART V.

I.

What shall I sing of Death? who came,
A silent messenger of Love,
And led Him to the courts above
Who bore on earth a splendid name,

Who wore his splendour without pride,
Who nobly fill'd a royal part,
A prince in deed, a king in heart,
Meet Consort for a peerless Bride.

The form shall moulder in the grave:
Thus much was fashion'd out of dust,
And we, though sad to lose it, must
Return to earth the gift she gave.

To Nature we resign the form,
Well knowing that she will not lose
An atom, though the wild wind blows,
And ever beats the pitiless storm.

II.

With unremitting toil, the wave
Wears out the old sepulchral rock.
Hereafter mighty throes will shock
The crust of earth that holds thy grave:

For peopled town, and lonely grange,
Fair flower'd dell, and forest-trees,
Shall mingle under rolling seas,
And all that is shall suffer change.

Old races perish. But a few
Faint tracks remain. New forms abound
A little while, then strew the ground;
But over all the eternal blue.

Here seemeth tumult, jar and strife,
New forms and types replacing all,
A birth and death, a rise and fall,
But thence a voice, "I am the Life."

III.

And through the seeming tumult, Thou
Did'st see the unseen, beyond the strife
Which throngs the crowded ways of life;
Then seeing darkly, clearly now;

For ever with the True and Just,
In whom we live and blindly move,
In weakness leaning on the love
Which summon'd Nature out of dust,

And gave to her the changeful Hours
Which in a circle round her stand,
And gave to Death the border-land
Which lies between thy soul and ours.

IV.

Feebly we go in darkness here,
With failing heart and aching brain.
Sad billows murmur on the main,
'O that the end, the end were near!'

'What end?' I answer, making moan,
'The end, the end,' they murmur still;
And rocks the myriad-vaulted hill;
And all the weary seasons groan.

Redeméd Soul, I would not vex
Thy wisdom with a foolish song.
Sweet Nature do'th not any wrong,
Though all her ways my soul perplex.

We cleave to faith, we watch and pray,
We fold thy mantle round the heart,
And watching, as we sit apart,
Catch distant glimpses of the day.

PART VI.

I.

Pure was thy life, and fair thy death,
A perfect lesson Thou hast left,
Which he may learn who is bereft,
Or in disquiet wandereth:

Allegiance to the true and good,
A constant heart, an eye that saw
God's ordinance in human law,
A little raft upon the flood:

A life fulfill'd with noble deeds,
A simple manly chastity,
A soul where rested charity
Above the tumult of the creeds.

II.

I WEEP for Her, my grief is theirs
Who knew Thee most and loved Thee best:
We sadden, but there cometh rest,
An after-fruit of tears and prayers;

And LOVE abideth evermore
To Thee, to us, and over all.
O Death, we come if thou but call;
We yearn to quit the doubtful shore.

III.

O LOVE, who art and wilt endure,
Great Nature circles at Thy feet:
In Thee, at length, we trust to meet,
When Thou hast made our passion pure.

FROM THE SPANISH.

ZAIDÉ.

"Tuya soy, tuya seré
Y tuya es mi vida, Zaidé."

I.

Pacing in a narrow street,
For a footfall listening,
For the light fall of light feet
In a balconied retreat,
Where long tendrils droop and meet,
While the stars are glistening;

II.

Pacing moodily below,
Groaning in his sorrow,
Vext with bitter pang and throe,
Vext at one delaying so,
While the weary hours go
Creeping towards the morrow;

III.

In upon his clouded heart
Steals a ray of gladness,
Making all the gloom depart,
Felt in darkness when apart,
Healing all the ancient smart,
Cheering all his sadness;

IV.

In among the dew-dript flowers
Drowsily awaking,
On the floor of terraced bowers
Drops a foot-fall, like soft showers
Kissing leaves in April hours,
While the dawn is breaking;

V.

Comes a vision past compare
Of a maiden slender,
Mantled with a veil of hair,
Draped in linen pure and fair,
While the Moor stands gazing there,
Rapt in musings tender.

VI.

'*Bella Mora!* Slender maid!
Silent is my pleading;
Not a sound of serenade,
Not a ring of spur or blade,
Not a murmur in the shade,
Tho' my heart is bleeding.'

VII.

'*A te Moro! Alá* knows
My heart too is wailing,
Woeful at the coming close
Of its blissful dream, which goes,
Like fair upland veil of snows
In the bright sun failing.'

VIII.

'Let thy fair dream fail and go,
Fairer dawns the morrow;
Shall thy tears like fountains flow
Night and day? Dear love, not so:
Lose thy fears, and trusting, know
Loss of all thy sorrow.'

IX.

Quail'd she then at love's behest,
Doubtful blushes hiding.
'Ere the night fail'd in the west,
Drooping on her lover's breast,
Found she there true maiden's rest
In love's strength abiding.

ROMANCES MORISCOS.

CANCION.

"De ver-le penar asi
Muy penada vivo yo,
Y remedio no le do.

More than little he loves me,
More than who should kinder be,
Loves me for this cruelty.

Yet, in being cruel to him,
My frail heart is rent with woe:
My vext eyes with tears grow dim,
Tears that rise but will not flow,
Seeing that he suffers so:
Shall I own it? No, ah no!

Cristóbal de Castillejo.

XARIFA. I.

"Peynaba yo mis cabellos
Con cuidado cada dia,
Y el viento los esparzia
Robando-me los mas bellos,
Ya su soplo y sombra d'ellos
Mi querido se durmio,
Si le recordare? O no!"

PRIMAVERA DE VARIOS ROMANCES, p. 88.

I.

AT morn I leave
My couch, and fondly comb my golden hair:
Of leaf and bud I weave
A chaplet rare,
Wherewith to make
My fair brow fairer at the noontide hour,
For thy sweet sake,
And to my sweetness add the fragrance of a flower.

II.

The breath of dawn
Proclaims thee coming, 'ere thou comest, dear:
About the shadowy lawn
Thy voice I hear.
The breeze of noon
With my fair locks shall fan thy brow, and I,
Thy lover, soon
With loving arms will form thy noontide canopy.

III.

My joy is full;
The bright sun gleams above the western flood,
And languid breezes lull
The dreaming wood.
Fair is my lot,
With fairy locks to shade thee; fair thy rest;
O love, wake not!
O bright sun, fail not, fail not in the golden west!

XARIFA. II.

"En el agua fria
Encendèis mi fuego."

I.

Fair galley, rest
In the golden west!
Lull him to sleep,
On the cold calm breast
Of the passionless deep;
Lull him, O lull him to sleep!

II.

Ah me, Ah me,
Would that I, with thee,
Might float at rest!
For the lone sad sea
Bears my love on its breast;
Lull him, O lull him to rest!

III.

Spread thy broad sail
To the morning gale;
Come to thy rest!
A breeze shall not fail
Thee, all day, from the west;
Lull him, O lull him to rest!

IV.

Fair galley, glide
On a tranquil tide
Home to thy rest!
The haven is wide,
And my sheltering breast
Yearns till it lull him to rest.

* * * * *

V.

O sleep, love, sleep
Once more in the deep
Of my still breast!
While I weep, love, sleep,
In my fond arms prest,
Lull'd in my bosom to rest!

ZAGALA.

I.

'*Alma mia!* Since thy truest
Leaves thee, show him what thou doest.'
'As my love doth, so I do,
Love him truly, being true.'

II.

'Yet, before I pass away,
Dost thou share my sorrow, say?'
'Silent grief can deftly tell
All the sadness of Farewell.'

III.

'Stillness of my soul's unrest,
Speak the sadness of thy breast.'
'If thy soul's unrest be still'd
Then is all my wish fulfill'd.'

IV.

'When thy love hath left thee, say
How the slow hours wear away?'
'Striving if I still may see,
Where I saw thee, aught of thee?'

V.

'But, if eye and memory fail,
Will thy constant thought prevail?'
'Folded art thou in my heart,
Nearest ever when apart.'

VI.

'Yet convince me, dear, that thou,
Absent, wilt be true as now.'
'Do I love thee, present? So,
Absent, I shall fonder grow.'

VII.

'Wilt thou bind thy willing heart?
Seal the bond thus, ere we part.'
'Love, thy kiss shall ever rest
On my lips, thou in my breast.'

JUAN DE LINARES.

JUANA. I.

I.

I know not what this phantom is that wanders
About the brain:
My lone heart knoweth not, but darkly ponders
Upon its pain.

II.

I hear the sad sea moaning round the bases
Of the lone hills:
Sad as the sea, sad memory embraces
Wide tract of ills;

III.

Dim hopes which glimmer like to distant mountains
In fading light,
Thro' tears which flow like never-failing fountains
By day and night.

JUANA. II.

I.

Are tears of any profit,
By night or day?
When love hath past away
From sight, is aught left of it?
Say, sister, say.

II.

Is love which passeth kinder
Than grief which stays?
Thro' lone nights and long days
Sorrow hath naught to bind her,
Yet sadly stays.

III.

Ah, tell me, sister, truly,
Is sorrow kind?
Doth she not sadly bind,
That, coming, love may duly
Due welcome find?

A SERENADE.

I.

In the sad starlight
Vigil I keep;
By the glad starlight
Sweet, my love, sleep!
Chill is the night, love,
Sad without thee;
Hast thou in sleep, love,
One sigh for me?

II.

Soft are thy lips, love,
Sweet is thy breath;
Hard is thy heart, love,
Bitter is death;
Yet sweet is bitter,
Bitter is sweet;
Soft is death's litter
Laid at thy feet.

III.

In the sad dawning
Vigil I keep;
All the glad morning
Sweet, my love, sleep!
Gather thy tresses
Of gold* to thy breast;
Grey morning presses,
I haste to my rest.

IV.

Fold thine arms close, love;
Sadly I wend;
Sighing for thee, love,
Unto my end;
Sighing for thee, love,
All the sad night,
Dying for thee, love,
In the grey light.

* *Las madejas de oro.*

ENGLISH LYRICS.

A FRAGMENT.

I.

Why not reminded be of hours so brief
And glorious?
Dwells not a beauty in the Autumn leaf?
And over memory's lingering joy is grief
Victorious?

II.

Is there no meaning in the having been
Once bless'd?
Can winter leaves still hold a summer green?
Or think you ancient wrongs have never been
Redress'd?

III.

Doth not joy linger in the silver cones
Of mountains?
Which gleam in sunlight of the western zones
While o'er the plain night sweeps with all its moans
Of fountains?

WATER-TONES.

I.

The still sad town oppresses me;
The Minster bell beats on my brain
Its monotone of ancient pain;
But here, the low sweet sobbing of the rivulet
blesses me.

II.

O brooklet, sob, and sigh, and fret;
Lone Miasótis dips her blue,
The bracken rusts with Autumn dew,
And all things droop and wear the tearful aspect
of regret.

III.

O brooklet, babble on in sorrow;
Garrulous was thy ripple of yore,
When young love stirr'd the heart's fresh core,
And young life wore from Spring to Summer.
Babble on in sorrow.

IV.

Tell out thy tale of hearts unblest,
Of hands that cling to faded flowers,
Or wrestle with the hopeless hours;
For in the deep eternal these and thou shalt
be at rest.

'ON REVIENT TOUJOURS.'

I.

Tears are dry, old vows are broken,
Dost forget?
Were those mute vows never spoken,
Eyes ne'er wet?

Clings the grey mist to the mountain
As before?
Shrills the mavis by the fountain
As of yore?

Doth the perfumed rose still charm thee,
Or frail musk?
Night-dews were not wont to harm thee
In the dusk.

Come and hear the rain-drop patter
In the brook:
Come; faint moonbeams will not flatter
Thy wan look.

Come; a faded flower shall greet thee
Past its bloom:
Come; a once glad step shall meet thee
In the gloom.

* * * * *

Still the myriad chafer humming
In deep shade:
Hark, I hear soft footsteps coming
Down the glade.

Who is this that cometh sadly
Down the glade?
Peace, fond heart, that boundest madly
In deep shade!

Love, thy cheek and brow are pallid,
Cold thy breath:
Would that vows once breathed were valid
Unto death!

All thy vows they said were broken;
Bitter jest!
Nearer, love; I see my token
In thy breast.

Nearer, love; thine eyes are filling;
Dost thou fear?
Simple faith strong doubt is killing
With a tear.

Nearer to my breast she clingeth
Than before:
Fairer tints the fair dawn bringeth
Than of yore.

'ON REVIENT TOUJOURS.'

II.

I.

Hast thou forgotten
  Thine ancient vow?
Wilt thou recal it?
  Recal it now.
Others have told me,
  Come tell me thou,
Hast thou forgotten
  Thine ancient vow?

II.

Others have told me,
  Come, let me hear;
Put thy sweet lips, love,
  Close to mine ear;
Softly, not sadly,
  No, not a tear;
Grief cometh gladly
  If thou art near.

III.

Are thine arms round me
  Tenderly, now?
Hath a spell bound me,
  Or is it thou?
If it be thou, love,
  Come tell me now,
Hast thou forgotten
  Thine ancient vow?

MIRANDA. I.

"Forget-me-not."

I.

Fair flower, I seek thee, year by year,
On land-lock'd pool or river;
Where reed and bulrush glance and quiver
Thy voice I hear,
'Forget-me-not.'

II.

O blossom still by lonely rill;
And round my lady's bower,
Uplift thy little voice, sweet flower,
And murmur still,
'Forget-me-not.'

III.

O whisper to her in day dreams;
And where she walks demurely
Gaze up into her pure eyes purely,
By crystal streams,
'Forget-me-not'!

IV.

O grow about her dainty feet
By water-courses lonely,
And murmur thou thy sweet name, only
Than hers less sweet,
'Forget-me-not'!

MIRANDA. II.

"But you——
——————— are created
Of every blossom's best."

THE TEMPEST.

I.

No bud for thy bosom to-day, dear,
No wreath for thy lily-brow;
The white Lily droops in the vale, dear,
The red Rose fails on the bough;

II.

Her frail petals languish and droop, dear;
Lost is the tint that I seek;
The crimson has past to thy lip, dear,
The bloom to thy sunny cheek.

III.

The Columbine pales in the wood, dear,
  The frail Harebell on the wold;
Thine eyes pale not, and thy locks, dear,
  Like the trees, are strew'd with gold.

IV.

Sweet Summer has past with the bloom, dear,
  Of flower and blossom and tree,
Fair memory lightens the gloom, dear,
  With glimpses of those and of thee.

HOMEWARD-BOUND.

I.

So late: past hope: it cannot be:
So many weary years at sea,
The wanderer doubts if that can be—
That dim blue line—reality;
Or if the horizon mock his sight
With feint of land, at fading light
Of dying day, with hope too bright
To cheer him thro' the gloom of night,
And dawn upon the morrow still serene and bright.

II.

Past hope: tho' weary eyes may pale,
And heart must sink, before the veil
Of envious night, which yields too slowly
Her place to sunrise calm and holy;

At early dawn that purple line
Reveals a wished-for realm of pine
That climb steep cliffs which glance and shine
And lave their feet in sunlit brine:
So, love, a dawn past hope, your eyes reveal to
mine.

THE END.

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